



GENDER & Sexuality FEMINIST Studies

Dear students, faculty and staff,

2014 started with Angela Davis on campus. Never before have I heard the word feminist used as many times within the hallowed walls of Mead Chapel as on that evening. Professor Emerita of Feminist Studies, Angela Davis reminded audiences that all social justice movements, including the prison abolitionist movement, needed to include feminist concerns.

That rousing speech set the tone for the next five months of the year. The newsletter documents the many different ways in which Chellis House and the academic program incorporated feminist concerns across a range of events and activities. Equally importantly our students have invigorated these concerns with energy and enthusiasm in a variety of venues: the continued success of It Happens Here, the buzz created by the new collaborative blog, beyond the green, and Queer Studies House activities.

This semester has also brought news of many achievements among colleagues. Several have received prestigious awards and grants: Febe Armanios, Brett Millier, Laurie Essig, and myself. Congratulations! Alas, we are also saying goodbye to two staunch feminists: Catherine Cabeen and Harshita Kamath. Both Harshita and Catherine have been dedicated colleagues who have participated tirelessly in our program, bringing speakers, hosting events and above all introducing feminism and feminist ideas to a new group of students. We will miss them but wish them good luck in their new endeavors. The fall semester will bring about many more changes. Laurie Essig will be chairing the program; she will also become a full-time faculty in GSFS. We also welcome a new colleague, Anson Koch-Rein, a graduate of Emory University, who will serve as my replacement while I am on leave. A number of other GSFS colleagues will also be on leave next year: Febe Armanios, Juana Gamero de Coca, Cheryl Faraone and Roman Graf. Good luck on your research endeavors.

Karin Hanta will be on leave next year as well. She will work on her dissertation in translation studies during the year. Emily Pedowitz, a GSFS alumna, is returning to take over as interim Chellis House Director. The year ahead will be filled with new faces and new energy. Good luck Laurie!

My best wishes for a great summer,

Sujata Moorti

Chair, Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies

GSFS Class of 2013.5 Thesis Presentations



On Friday, January 31, 2014 GSFS seniors Allie Weinstein and Gregg Butler presented their theses to a very interested audience. Allie investigated one for-profit and 14 non-profit health care centers with a feminist mission in her thesis "Feminism for the Whole Body, Feminism for Everybody: The Shifting Landscape of Feminist Health Centers in the U.S." Allie particularly focused on such question as how these centers negotiate being pigeonholed as "just abortion centers" in a time in which state lawmakers are trying to chip away at abortion rights; whether they also include trans women in their programs; and how women's embodied knowledge is being respected.

In his thesis "Who Has the Right to Shelter? Queer and Trans Homeless Youth in Burlington and New York," Gregg Butler compared two youth homeless shelters in New York City and Burlington, Vermont, specifically focusing on the question which kind of identity is being privileged in these shelters and how queer and trans homeless youth are being taught to participate in democracy and demand their rights.



Gregg Butler presenting his findings

Fraker Prize to Anna Flinchbaugh

The Alison G. Fraker Prize is an annual fixture during Women's History Month. It is awarded to the best paper or project on a subject related to gender, sexuality and feminist studies on or close to International Women's Day on March 8. On March 6, 2014, all the nominees, nominators and their friends gathered for a dessert reception at the Château Grand Salon. This year, thirteen students were nominated: Sarah Champ for her paper "Zumba Fitness: Fun or Perpetrator of Enlightened Sexism and Latina Iconicity;" Cate Costley for her paper "Inside Catherine's Cell: Understanding the Drive towards Asceticism in Late Medieval Religious Women;" Rebecca Crochiere for her paper "A Woman in a Man's Arena – a Feminized Performance of Sport;" Brita Fisher for her paper "The Postfeminist Framework of Cosmopolitan Magazine;" Anna Flinchbaugh for her zine "Pandrogyny," in which she addressed feminism's relationship with androgyny; Victoria Hadley for her paper "Linguistic Othering and the Rejection of the Concept of Sexual Identity in Japan;" Sinead Keirans for her short film "Eggshells;" Jenny Marks and Alex Strott for their zine, "Tink: A Radical Feminist Mega-Zine;" Kelsi Morgan for her paper "Adopted Sons and the Daughters They Displace: Understanding the Link between Adult Male Adoption and Women in Business in Japan;" Firas Nasr for his reflective essay "I Know What to Do;" Alex Strott for her paper "Coming Out in to Queerness in __ Easy Steps;" Ethan Vorel for his paper "The Conflation of Sports, War and Manhood: Constructing Masculinity in Sport;" and Olivia Wold for her paper "Triumphant, Not Militant: Middlebury College Students and their Engagement in the Women's Suffrage Movement."

Anna Flinchbaugh received the Fraker Prize for her engaging zine in which she investigated how androgyny can reinforce the gender binary. Rebecca Crochiere and Sarah Champ received honorable mention. While Rebecca analyzed her own athletic and gender performance on the basis of gender theory, Sarah examined her own experience of zumba with a theoretical framing that allowed readers to understand how this fitness practice poaches Latina culture and simultaneously shores up whiteness.



Sujata Moorti (first on right) honors Fraker Prize winner Anna Flinchbaugh (second from left).

Speaking the Unspeakable

Professor Rula Quawas from Jordan

By Lily Andrews

Our celebration of Women's History Month started off with Professor Rula Quawas' vivacious talk "Voices of Young Jordanian Women: Speaking the Unspeakable." Professor Quawas is an Arab feminist, started a women's studies center in Jordan, mentored Jordanian students in organizing three campaigns around feminist issues and is now a Fulbright Scholar at Champlain College.

Professor Quawas started out her talk with a poem that emphasized light and hope within an experience of oppression. Initially, Professor Quawas emphasized that even as her female students experience silencing, shaming and violence, they fight for change (often joining hands with progressive young men). She went on to highlight three campaigns. The first was about nationality and citizenship. Professor Quawas argued that many people in Jordan take issue with the patrilineal nature of citizenship, but students are fighting this issue in the streets, on Twitter, in the Prime Minister's office, and through other creative means.

The second campaign was in response to a Jordanian law, which states that when a man rapes an underage woman it is then legal for him to marry her. Quawas pointed out that this is a viable option for many young men who fear that they will be rejected if they ask for a young woman's hand. [Of course, this sort of law immediately evokes sensationalized outrage, but it is useful to reflect on the prevalence of and norms around rape in our own contexts.] Professor Quawas did not state specifically how women were resisting this en masse, though pointed out individual acts of disobedience, which in some cases are as dramatic as suicide.

The third campaign challenged sexual harassment. Here, I related most directly: I have often experienced street harassment and men's accompanying attitudes of entitlement, as have most other women I know. However, Quawas was quick to argue that sexual harassment in the Mid-

dle East and North Africa is more extreme, due to the way Jordanian men are raised to be entitled. In response to sexual harassment, Quawas' students started a campaign by taking to the streets, holding hands and carrying signs proclaiming: "I might be your daughter, mother or wife" and "I don't want to be harassed by you." They also created a YouTube video. Beyond these campaigns, young women are challenging popular notions of virginity. She ended her talk with a poem that again called attention to the power of the light and possibility within each of us.

During the question and answer period, Professor Quawas highlighted the intersection between Islam and Feminism and the difficulty/importance of using the Arabic language to establish feminist discourse. In addressing Islam and Feminism, Quawas pointed out the difficulty of interpreting a religious text that is as complex as the Qur'an, but she seemed to say that there is room for disagreement over misogynist interpretations. She highlighted the cultural taboos of talking about sex, but also the burgeoning sexual revolution: sexologists now speak openly on the radio and sexual politics is discussed on TV. However, despite activism and inklings of change, she argued that Jordanian women continue to be extremely and uniquely oppressed by Jordanian patriarchy.

During and after the talk, I and several other audience members that I spoke to had qualms about how Professor Quawas portrayed the misogyny of Arab countries as if it was inherent to their culture. I worry that this talk may have reinforced existing Islamophobia and re-essentialized Arab women's oppression as the result of a patriarchal culture and religion, taking it out of context of neo-liberalism, globalization and neo-colonialism. However, in the interest of deeply listening to Professor Quawas' experiences with and activism against a stubborn patriarchy, perhaps what we can conclude is something a bit more

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A Reflection on Courtney Martin's Talk: "Perfect Girls"

On February 19, feminist activist Courtney Martin spoke about her book *Perfect Girls—Starving Daughters* at McCullough Social Space. Since every seat in the auditorium was taken, the talk must have hit a raw nerve at Middlebury. Courtney Martin, who co-founded the influential blog Feministing, spoke about the pressures that women and girls across all social classes and ethnic groups are facing to reach “effortless physical perfection” and hurt themselves physically and mentally in the process. Here is what

Mikaela Perry '14 took away from the talk:

“As a senior who is about to graduate, I have been reflecting on my time here at Middlebury. In these reflections, one of the events that stands out in my mind is Courtney Martin’s talk “Perfect Girls.” I came away from this event unable to stop thinking about the things she had said, the things I have witnessed and felt at Middlebury, and how body image issues affect my own life both within and outside of Middlebury. Martin’s talk was powerful not only for me, but also for many who attended. I believe this is because the topics relating to body image issues that she was covering are so relevant to this campus. One of the first things I noticed upon arriving to the Middlebury campus was an obsession with food, exercise, and image among the general student body. I did not know how to fit into this culture because I hadn’t had exposure to it before, but the effects of these unspoken issues were something I had to deal with every day. I know I wasn’t alone. Martin talked about issues that I believe most women on this campus think about when they are hanging out with friends, pushing themselves out of bed early to go to the gym, or silently debating whether they should have a piece of pie after dinner. These issues consume us, yet we only talk about them with the closest of close friends. Sometimes we don’t talk about them at all, and that is what I believe to be most dangerous. I’m glad Martin came to Middlebury and discussed these issues out in



Courtney Martin speaking at McCullough Social Space

the open. There was something special about knowing that these issues affect almost everyone in our society to different degrees, and that we do not need to feel alone. The bottom line is that we do not need to change our bodies but rather our self-loathing behavior. Martin’s talk reminded me that I needed to put energy into loving myself. I hope it did the same for the other audience members as well.”

Students Take On The Vagina Monologues

February 14 is no longer only for sweethearts. Since 1998, performances of Middlebury alumna Eve Ensler's *Vagina Monologues* have taken place around the world. The play deals with different aspects of the women's experiences such as sex, love, birth, menstruation, and also focuses on instances of rape and incest to raise awareness about sexual and gender violence. Last year, Eve Ensler called on the world to stage a giant dance party in addition to performing the *Vagina Monologues*.

In "One Billion Rising" events in numerous countries,

theater department. She directed an international cast of female-identified performers, including Jiya Pandya, Akhila Khanna, Helen Wu, Katie Carlson, Marium Sultan, Dana Tripp, Adara Wicaksono, Sarah James, Amanda Lorena Neira, Gabrielle Owens, Sandra Markowitz,

Celeste Allen, Maeve Grady, and Jingyi Wu. Gabbie Santos lent a helpful hand by stage-managing the play. Helen Wu reflected about the play by sharing a very personal experience, "Being a part of



The cast of The Vagina Monologues

people have been trying to make the earth shake to put an end to violence.

This year, Chellis House organized both a One Billion Rising event as well as a production of the *Vagina Monologues*. Not even heavy snowfall could prevent a dozen activists from gathering at McCullough Social Space for a One Billion Rising party with Zumba instructor Liz Cleveland. We worked up enough sweat to march with our pink-red signs on the snowy streets.

In the evening, Chellis House monitor and Midsafe advocate Rebecca Coates-Finke brought a production of the *Vagina Monologues* to the stage. Rebecca has been earning her drama chops in high school and in Middlebury's

One Billion Rising march

the *Vagina Monologues* has made me feel more loving and more loved," she said. "I did something special to celebrate being a woman—with my friends' instructions, encouragement, and some shared frustration, I tried my very first tampon, three times before I eventually figured it out. I felt like a heroine who has just conquered a city. In the end, it didn't seem the world's worst invention." Gabbie Santos concurred, "The *Vagina Monologues* was a powerful reminder for me to keep exploring what it means to be a woman, to find what is beautiful and to acknowledge what is difficult. I felt honored to have worked with the passionate and inspiring women of the production. They have shown me what it truly means to be part of a community."

However, the actors also realized the limitations of the play. Next year, Rebecca Coates-Finke is planning to organize a winter term workshop in which people of all genders can write their monologues. These monologues will hopefully be performed on February 14. This year's event raised over \$700 for Womensafe.

The Red Tent: A Day for Meaningful Conversations

On Sunday, March 9, 2014, about 100 people who identify as women gathered at McCullough Social Space for Middlebury's first "Red Tent Event." The idea originated with **Anna Stevens '13**, who wanted to help create an event where women could take out time to relax and have meaningful conversations. She approached Chellis House director Karin Hanta and together with Chellis House monitors Jackie Park, Alex Strott, Rebecca Coates-Finke, Yingyi Wu, Rabeya Jawaid, Lily Andrews, Freshta Basij-Rasikh and Adela Habib, they worked out a plan for a Red Tent event, similar to the one Anna had visited in Providence, Rhode Island. In a happy coincidence, former Middlebury student Sarah Rose Attman had approached the Chellis House in the spring of 2013 with the idea to create a seed fund to help build authentic community among women. As all the participants



in this project started to talk, they also crossed paths with Nicole Burke and Alyson Young, two holistic health practitioners from the Two Wolves Center in Vergennes. Nicole and Alyson had led Red Tent workshops in other communities and signed on to build and decorate a beautiful physical structure on the McCullough stage and lead the

conversations within the tent.

One day after International Women's Day, dozens of women from Middlebury College and Addison County discussed and meditated on the ancient and ever-changing story of what it means to be a woman. Participants marveled how the beautiful and warm physical space of a tent of many red hues had emerged from four simple



Students gathering at McCoullough for Red Tent

pop-up tents and a dozen of blankets, scarves, and pillows. The idea for Red Tent events had been sparked over ten years ago when Anita Diamant published the eponymous novel about Jacob's tribe. In her book, she describes how the women of the Bible find community in a red tent to which they retreat during menstruation. Taking a cue from the body-centered inspiration for the book, the Red Tent at Middlebury also included workshops on menstrual and sexual health. The organizations Planned Parenthood and Vermont Works for Women set up informational tables. Participants tried out vegan nail polish, and plant-based creams and lotions made by Susan Shashok from Caroline's Dream. Henna artist Rebecca Freedner embellished hands with intricate floral patterns. Attendees came together at a craft table and relaxed while making cards.

Middlebury College's Red Tent event has since inspired donor Sarah Attman to establish the Red Tent Foundation (www.redtentfoundation.org). With the help of the Middlebury model, Sarah and her mother Dr. Patricia Charrier Attman would like to assist in improving the lives of college women around the country, by helping promote emotional health and facilitating an authentic sense of community.

Sexual Straightjackets and Queer Escapes:

by Lily Andrews

At the week-long symposium of the Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies, scholars questioned the concept of family in various cultural contexts.

A student-led event, called **MiddQUEER**, kicked off the 2014 Gensler Symposium “Sexual Straightjackets and Queer Escapes.” At the event, organizers **Alex Strott ’14.5** and **Jackie Park ’15** showed a video they had made, in which they questioned students using the “Heterosexual Questionnaire.” This Questionnaire is designed to “flip the script” and ask straight people “when did you come out as straight” and “do you think it’s just a phase,” questions that usually only gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer (etc.) folks must answer. The students applied the Questionnaire to all of the interviewees, regardless of their sexuality. After screening the video, the audience engaged in a two-hour discussion.

All in all, it was a challenging conversation. The first question asked was, “why are there no black or Latino students in the film?” Although this lack of representation was not intentional, the organizers and audience agreed that this was a problem. The conversation went on to discuss “born this way” tropes and the dangers of biological understandings of sexuality (or any aspect of identity), as well as the inclu/exclusivity of the LGBTQIA (etc.) community and what it means to be an ally.



Alex Strott and Jackie Park lead the discussion at Crossroads Café

2014 Gensler Family Symposium on Feminism in a Global Context

On Tuesday, **Dr. Nikki Young**, a gender, sexuality and feminist studies professor at Bucknell University, delivered a talk entitled “I am NOT that Hungry: Creative Resistance, Black Queers and Family.” Dr. Young began by playing a script: Indigo, a young black lesbian that Young interviewed, talks back to her foster family, who rejects her because of her sexuality. Faced with a “choice” between loss of material resources and a denial of self, Indigo responds, “I am not that hungry.” Through doing so, she enacts queer resistance by loving herself, refusing to abide by familial disciplines and declaring that she will find a way to feed herself without changing herself. Above all, Indigo asserts wholeness.

In discussing morality and black queer families, Young highlighted how both black and queer as categories of identity are devalued through markers of bodies, production capacity, cognitive abilities, rights and privileges, and to understand black queers as moral exemplars is to subvert notions of goodness, humanity and morality as these concepts are usually constructed.

The bulk of her talk focused on how the black queer people that she interviewed reinvented modes of relationality and family structure in a way that challenged capitalist-centered family norms. Young outlined the history of the family as a capitalist unit, rooted in the slave economy, and characterized by racial boundaries: white domesticity and gendered family structure are marked by the slave economies beyond it. Moreover, she outlined the family as a zone of disciplinary power, enforcing heteronormative sexual and gender formations through spatial design and internal surveillance. She characterized the modern, nor-

malized, capitalist family as mirroring the market system through values of individualism and independence; private nuclear ownership; male leadership; and private and public division. Young argued that black queer families defy these formations through means of disruption (confronting norms); creative resistance (pushing back against power) and imagination (generating new realities).

Rejecting that families must be based on “self-interested divisiveness,” sexual monogamy, resource hoarding and the colonization of bodies, the black queer people Professor Young interviewed instead valued interdependence, loyalty and presence, and unconditional but non-compulsory relationships. One interviewee, Sage, worked on creating radically different relationships outside of capitalism, and holds family in more than one location through understanding oneself as a subject of community and sharing economic resources.

El Alice practiced the concept of staying down, or journeying with a person, staying present for them and believing in the possibility of them as a new mode of relationality. Xavier holds monthly gatherings for their Atlanta family, a community that holds each other accountable, and is able to tell each other how they feel by coming from a place of enrichment and true critique, in a way that is affirming and allows the freedom and safety to be.

Young initiated questions by asking for examples of how we have subverted something oppressive in our own lives; Young echoed my answer, saying that education—which can be a tool to strengthen norms—can also be a tool for critical resistance. One student asked about policing themselves, and the battle between active resis-



Dr. Nikki Young presenting

Sexual Straitjackets and Queer Escapes:

tance and assimilation at institutions where they are marginalized, othered subjects. Another student asked about how to enact self love and care in the face of direct adversity, and Young suggested the importance of saying no, and black feminist healing work that focuses on survival, self-love, sacred practices such as reciting a mantra (part of the Combahee statement that black women are inherently valuable), and shaping communities to take refuge from dominant spaces. Others asked about how to enact this resistance within our own families (those interviewed by Young were driven by values, developed from a need to survive, the knowledge of oppressive structures and dynamics, and the possibility of self-realization through community); about family as a racialized, political term; and about the possibility of rejecting the word “family” altogether. This was a riveting talk focusing on resistance narratives; I recommend tracking down Young’s writings on the topic for anyone who missed it.

On Wednesday, the slam poetry duo **Sister Outsider** arrived at Middlebury to conduct a writing workshop on anger and its uses as a productive, creative force. However, too few students arrived in Carr Hall and the workshop was cancelled. (Pause on this a moment). Later that night, Sister Outsider DYNAMICALLY performed in Dana Auditorium for about an hour. It is impossible to translate the power of their performance... they told it like it is, called out white/male/straight privilege and through doing so gave life to issues that so seriously plague our campus and society at large. Students in the audience were riveted. One student referred to the performance as “medicine,” calling attention to the lack of these voices are on campus. The poems performed included “Karma,” focusing on themes of slavery, race-based oppression and fierce resistance; “Home,” describing space and place of community; “1-800 White Male Privilege,” the menstruation poem that addressed “the random guy on Twitter,” “Dear Straight People,” a poem on language and being

unashamed of speaking Spanish and having an accent when speaking English, and a poem on brown female bodies loving each other, and the disruption that inevitably comes: “there is always a vulture lurking in this poem.”

On Thursday, **Dr. Suzanna Walters** of Northeastern University delivered an “anti-academic” talk based on her new book. The talk was entitled: “The Tolerance Trap: How God, Genes and Good Intentions are Sabotaging Gay Equality.” In her talk, she strongly critiqued gay marriage as the number one LGBTQ civil rights issue and fiercely attacked the anti-feminist rhetoric and ideology of immutability that the arguments for gay marriage are based on. First, Walters rejected the idea that gay equality has been won, since gender and sexual based violence, homelessness and job discrimination persist; she also asserted that marriage is an important win for many. Then, she outlined the issue with tolerance: primarily, the concept and framework of tolerance is an issue because it asks nothing of the dominant – neither heteronormativity nor straight citizens must negotiate power, privilege or resources in order to grant moral acceptability to gayness. Walters spent the majority of her talk discussing immutability, or the idea that sexuality is biologically determined and hard-wired. Lady Gaga, Macklemore and *The New York Times*, as well as most liberal marriage defenders and straight allies, have bought into the narrative that GLBTQ people are born this way and can’t change, even if they tried. Drawing attention to anti-racist and feminist arguments against pseudo-science and biological causation, however, Walters fiercely warned us against accepting this trope, which denies the truth that race, gender and sexuality are all socially constructed categories (albeit with real consequences). Moreover, Walters went on to critique the focus on marriage, which takes away resources from other sexually related civil rights, and also critiqued marriage as an institution, which privileges the heteronorma-

2014 Gensler Family Symposium on Feminism in a Global Context

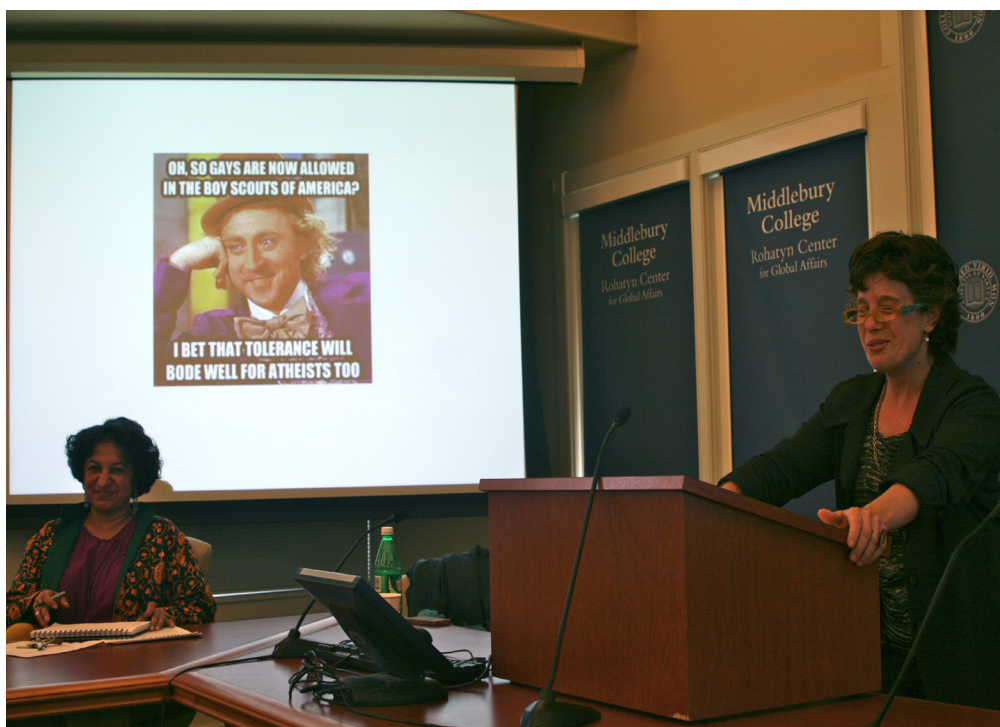
tive family structure, devalues alternative forms of kinship and care and grants citizenship and civil rights based on marriage.

Walters' strongest argument called attention to the futility of a movement that doesn't seek to disrupt the powers that be. If a gay rights movement doesn't queer straight structures and re-imagine gender and sexual formations, then we lose the possibility of proliferating new ways of life and simply reinforce existing, oppressive insti-

but asserted that tolerance is not an appropriate framework for trans liberation, either. Walters suggested a re-energizing of a radical gay movement—linked to larger social justice issues—as a means to move away from the tolerance trap. Walters wondered where the movement to boycott marriage as an exclusive institution was, while acknowledging the hegemony of an ideology of love; was challenged on her use of the word gay and queer instead of lesbian; and acknowledged

that even as gay marriage benefits more than the upper-class, white male subject, it is a movement attractive to straight allies and privileged LGBTQ subjects because it is safe, politically correct and fought with few consequences. All in all, tolerance discourse and gay marriage has co-opted the GLBTQ rights movement, and returned us to the dangerous territory of biological determinism.

Finally, on Friday, **Professor Linda White**, of Middlebury College, delivered a talk on "What's in a Name? Marriage and Family Law in Japan," that concluded the Gensler Family



Suzanna Walters presents at the Rohatyn Center

tutions. Walters asked, how have we gone from, "we're here, we're queer, get used to it," to "we're not really that gay can you accept us please?" She ended with the warning that tolerance is antithetical to a civil rights movement, and we would do well to reexamine ourselves.

In the question and answer period, Walters was asked about the usefulness of the term ally, and asserted that acting against a certain structure of oppression should not become an identity category. She attended to her exclusion of trans rights,

Symposium. In this talk, White discussed the Koseki, a Household Registration Law and document. The Koseki is invested with the power of distributing citizenship in Japan; if you are not registered with a Koseki, then you do not have civil rights. White is interested in the Koseki not only because of the power it holds, but also because it mandates a heteronormative family structure and regulates Japanese society through these means of naming and organization. She commented that historically, in Japan and elsewhere, naming and

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The Queer Studies House Turns 5!

Five years have passed since two students with a passion for queer studies worked the administrative system to establish the Queer Studies Academic Interest House (white house next to Chellis House). Molli Freeman-Lynde and Christine Bachman-Sanders visited campus on April 24 to walk down memory lane and inspire current residents. During Molli and Christine's time, a presidential election was heating up. They organized their own "Tea Parties" to discuss political issues from a queer theory angle. Molli, a law student at Northeastern University, and Christine, a doctoral student in American Studies at the University of Minnesota as of fall 2014, celebrated half a decade of QSH with current residents Drew Kreuzman, Petr Knor, Jackie Park and Alex Strott. A rainbow cake from Bristol Bakery was served at a reception at the house.



QSH founding members and current residents celebrating

continued from p. 11 Linda White talk

categorization have been (and continue to be) sites of formidable power.

Specifically, White talked about surnames and registering children. In 1872, the new Koseki law required that each household take only one surname. There have been recent court hearings to challenge the law that requires one surname, on the basis of loss of identity. As of now, 96% of women take their husband's surnames. Moreover, the document requires that a child be registered within six months in order to receive any state identification documents. And, only a child born in wedlock can be registered as legitimate. GLBTQ folk and/or non-normative families have little options to subvert the power of the Koseki, though many are resisting, especially as economic instability has decreased the prevalence of marriage in Japan. However, the Koseki still holds power. In order to explain why the Koseki has persisted through the centuries and still will not go away, White pointed to the surveillance, the state regulation of family, that is indicative of modernity and modern government structures. White argued that the Koseki produces gendered Japanese subjects, constructs the family as heteronormative and gives subjects identity while at the same time oppressing them.

Wade Davis: Masculinity, Race, and Athletics

By Mzwakithi Mthokozisi Shongwe

Wade Davis, an athlete-turned-LGBTQ advocate, gave an informative and engaging talk at Mead Chapel on January 21. As Drew Kreutzman '16 mentioned in his opening remarks, "[Wade Davis] represents the intersection of masculinity, race, and sportsmanship."

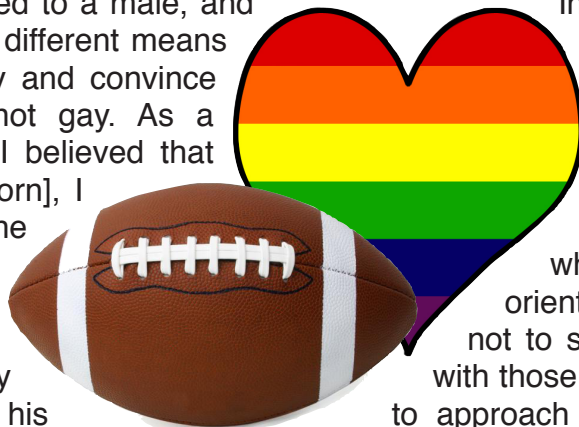
Mr. Davis shared with the audience the story of how he stuttered as a child and how he had been raised in a very religious setting that preached the notions of an absolute truth that defined what was wrong and what was right. As a teenager, he recalled the first moment he had felt sexually attracted to a male, and how he had sought out different means as he grew older to try and convince himself that he was not gay. As a teenager, Wade said, "I believed that each time I watched [porn], I was only looking at the female." During his high school years, Wade took part in the verbal harassment of the only openly gay male at his school. What made this part of the talk particularly engaging was when Wade shared why he attacked the openly gay teenager. "I hated him because he showed up every day as who he was."

In the discourse of his sexuality, Wade shared the feelings of wanting to distance himself from the male with whom he shared his first kiss. Interestingly, these feelings were not primarily shame or guilt, but rather because that kiss is what truly let him know that he was gay. In his own words, "Eric made it real to be gay."

Eventually, Wade shared his coming-out story. It disrupted his family relations, particularly his relationship with his mother. To say she was disappointed would be an understatement. Words such as "I wish you were rotting in jail for the rest of your life than to be gay" were just some

of the vivid imagery Wade recounted his mother's embitterment with his decision to come out. However, these were not the words that captured the audience in Mead Chapel. "Why would you wanna be gay if you're already black?" In the days following the talk, these are the words that will stick with many. In the context of the MLK Celebrations and Lecture Series, Wade's story was a mere glimpse into some of the societal issues the US has to deal with. As Wade said, "You operate under a different code when you're black, and you also operate on a different code if you are not straight. You operate under [a more complex] code if you're both black and gay."

In his concluding remarks, Wade turned to the role allies can play in supporting the LGBTQ community. His words: listen more than you talk because as a straight person you will never understand what it's like to live in a heterosexual world when you have a different sexual orientation. Lastly, he told the audience not to succumb to sympathy when dealing with those shunned by the system, but instead to approach people with something positive in hand. Sympathy does not do much after all.



Did you know about courses fulfilling breadth requirements?

Critical Sexuality Studies

GSFS/AMST 0241: Sexuality in the United States: Histories and Identities

Intersectionality/Critical Race

GSFS/SOAN 0315: Sociology of Freakishness

Transnational/National Contexts

GSFS/JAPN 0245: Women's Activism in Contemporary Japan
GSFS/HIST 0373: History of American Women: 1869-1999

Dr. Jay Michaelson Talk: God vs. Gay?

By Alex Strott

On Thursday, November 21, **Dr. Jay Michaelson** gave a lecture entitled “God vs. Gay? The Religious Case for Equality” based on his book of the same title published in 2011. Dr. Michaelson is the author of five books dealing with the topics of religion, sexuality, law, contemplative practice, and the points of intersections amongst these subjects.

By way of introduction, Dr. Michaelson gave his audience a bit of background information on his life and upbringing. He explained that he “grew up a ‘nice Jewish boy’” who “breathed in a casual homophobia” the same way he breathed in a casual racism and sexism as a man with privilege. At first he believed that there was no way to reconcile his identity as a Jewish man with his identity as a gay man, so for ten years of his adult life he decided to lie about who he was, living life in “the closet” or, perhaps more accurately, the tomb in which those who can pass as heterosexual often hide. The levee finally broke one day when he, ironically enough, took a walk up Mount Sodom and decided to tell his God that he could not suppress himself any longer, and that He would just have to deal with it. Dr. Michaelson describes this act as “the most religious thing [he] ever did” even though, according to others, this act would probably represent the most irreligious thing he ever did.

Dr. Michaelson then went on to emphasize the importance of recognizing one’s privilege from within or without the LGBTQ community. He stated

that if we had the privilege of being “over” the issue of LGBTQ rights, then we had the responsibility to advocate for social justice elsewhere, and especially in places where people do not have the rights and protections we might have. He cited the fact that while marriage equality has increasingly become recognized in multiple states, youth LGBTQ homelessness has actually risen in the last few years due to structural inequalities.

There are not enough beds for these youth in NYC homeless shelters, and trans women of color are especially targeted, often violently.

“If we have the privilege to be ‘over’ this issue, we have the responsibility not to be ‘over’ this issue,” said Dr. Michaelson, “Especially when it comes to issues dealing with intersectionality that are not a part of the mainstream movement.”

In the next part of his lecture, Dr. Michaelson addressed how to handle situations where someone tries to use the Bible as justification against homosexuality or LGBTQ rights.

He explained that—instead of taking the bait and turning the discussion into an analysis of biblical data, or disregarding the argument completely because we do not believe in nor want to deal with the Bible in any way, shape, or form

— the best option is to use the “feel, felt, found” method. Using personal narratives in an “I know how you feel...I felt...Then I found...” structure is an effective way to show empathy and to share stories of real, lived experience with those who may never have otherwise understood. No amount of mockery from a socially liberal person is



Dr. Michaelson with Dave Yedid '15

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Negotiating Same Sex Desire in the Age of HIV

By Lily Andrews

In a lunchtime talk on February 28, 2014 entitled “Trust, Love and Desire: Negotiating Same Sex Desire in the Age of HIV,” Middlebury psychology professor **Robert Moeller** presented his findings about the emotionally driven risk reduction strategies enacted by a group of gay men in New York. Moeller introduced his talk by indicating his deep interest in the role of trust and emotions in decision-making, specifically in the gay male context. Unsatisfied with the existing theories around behavior interventions that are currently at the center of HIV research, but that ignore the important role of emotions, Moeller approaches this project using the Risk Reduction Model and paid close attention to both emotion and reasoning within it. Working within Project Desire, Moeller formulated two questions that guided his research with a break-off group of 54 men: what risk reduction strategies are currently utilized by gay men to avoid HIV? And, how do these young gay men construct the meaning of their decisions? He conducted interviews with 54 men between the ages of 18 and 29, who were selected from a larger study. Three-quarters of the men were African American, Latino and Asian American; the other quarter was white. All men consented to an HIV screening mandated by the Department of Health, which in part funded this project.

Professor Moeller embarked on this project driven by several progressive notions: first, emotion—largely figured as irrational—is central in rational decision making (such as choosing sexual partners); second, risk reduction strategies already exist within the gay male community, and young gay men are actively trying to engage in safe sex; third, we need new theories around HIV prevention that more correctly mirror the lives and

minds of gay men; finally, although at times used as a tool of stigmatization, the prevalence of HIV in the gay male community is a pressing and still widespread problem that urgently needs to be addressed (one third of gay men will contract HIV by age 30).

Professor Moeller also embarked on his research with the intent to listen to the research volunteers and learn something new about their strategies. He did so through encouraging and looking for a “liberated response,” which is when people think out loud in the researcher’s presence. He also did so through understanding that the volunteers would not represent anyone but themselves; instead, they might present theories that could then be tested in a broader group. Finally, he accomplished his research through following a particular listening guide developed by psychologist Carol Gilligan, which attempts to identify how a subject constructs his particular reality.

For most of the talk, he presented his findings on the risk reduction strategy called “changes in strategic positioning,” which refers to a divergence tactic where gay men (following a break in trust and thereby a presentation of risk) switch to lower risk sexual positions. He presented three examples from three volunteers, Marty, Rachard and Collin. Each volunteer had disassociated from a particularly painful experience: the infidelity of a partner that resulted in STI contraction; a sudden sexual assault; and the pervasive lack of trust that arose from a particular analysis of the gay community as licentious, reckless and stigmatizing of feminine relationship and trust building. Moeller particularly highlighted this notion of gendered dynamics within gay male relationships: trust building and relationship maintenance is seen as feminine, called “drama,” and therefore devalued.

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In his talk, Professor Robert Moeller investigated the role of trust and emotions in decision-making in sexual interactions.

Despina Stratigakos: Hitler at Home

By Lily Andrews

Despina Stratigakos, Professor of Architectural History at the University of Buffalo, gave a lecture entitled “Playing the Good Neighbor: Hitler’s Domestic Makeover and the Power of Interior Design.” She argues that through widely distributing images of a cultured, sensitive domestic life, Hitler portrayed himself as a good neighbor and earned the respect and trust of many German citizens and the international community.

Stratigakos began her talk by stating that domestic spaces must be taken seriously as spheres of power, and that impetus for her book stems from lack of attention paid to the ideological role of *domestic* architecture in the Third Reich. In the early 1930s, Hitler’s regime refashioned the dictator’s image, creating a myth of the domestic Hitler and distancing him from violence, war and rumors of sexual degeneracy. Interestingly, this coincided with and was facilitated by the interior renovation of his two homes, his Munich apartment and Berghof chalet. Female interior designer, Gerdy Troost, primarily executed the architectural project. While she designed the Munich apartment to showcase Nazi ideals, by modeling the stark, rectilinear and modernist style of the nationalist public spaces and through tribute to *German* art, the public was not allowed access to the interior

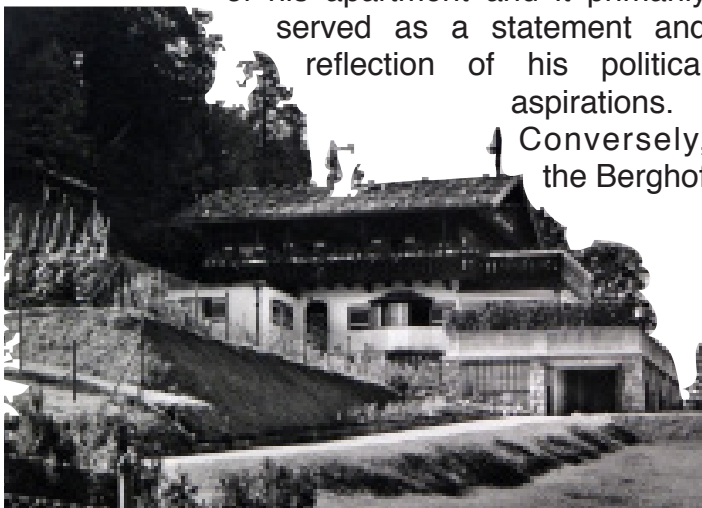
of his apartment and it primarily served as a statement and reflection of his political aspirations.

Conversely, the Berghof

chalet became a popular symbol of the Führer’s humanity. Popular photographs taken at the mountain retreat—as well as diplomatic use of the facility—manipulated viewers into considering Hitler as a sensitive, reasonable man that was close to nature; mountains were the backdrop for photographs that featured him with dogs and children. A number of articles and publications in high profile publications featured the Führer’s home renovation projects, as well as popular photographs taken at his mountain retreat, beginning in 1935 and continuing through the war. As Stratigakos emphatically stated, the importance of these images cannot be underestimated: they were propaganda that enabled (some) Germans and the international community to consume fantasies and distracted from the violence he committed.

The ties of the Third Reich to German domestic space, art and art consumption extended to the policing of Nazi kitsch: the image of the swastika was strictly regulated and showcased the Nazi’s ideological tie between degenerate art and the Bolsheviks and Jewish people. Artistic and domestic images sanctioned by the regime became important symbols of allegiance and were also fetishized.

Eventually, Hitler’s homes were destroyed: the Berghof was bombed in 1945 by the Allies, with little left today except for graffitied trees and a scarred landscape. Similarly, Hitler’s Munich apartment was occupied by American soldiers, looted, and has currently been refashioned into a Police station and intentionally forgotten. Gerdy Troost, who continued to design even after serving her sentence for war crimes, is now dead. However, the idyllic images still circulate and to a great extent remain unexamined. Professor Stratigakos encourages us to absorb how politicized the domestic spaces of Germany were; how adept Nazis were at manipulation as they turned a dangerous firebrand into an admired stately figure; and to recognize how even realms commonly considered apolitical (such as *home*



magazines) are important sites of power and propaganda.

At diplomatic meetings at Berghof, foreign politicians were impressed by Hitler—someone you could negotiate with, refined, a true gentleman. Hitler and his regime succeeded in having many believe that privately, he was really a good guy. Let this be a lesson in appreciation for the highly politicized domestic sphere, generally.

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Continued from p.4 Rula Quawas Talk

textured, and a bit more transnational than simply a rejection or an affirmation. Street harassment, the hymen/virginity fetish and a lack of language for feminism are phenomenon that we share—and perhaps, it is most useful to understand that whatever the regional particularities, each local account of misogyny sheds light on what is a globalized phenomenon of patriarchy, misogyny and chauvinist entitlement. Since reading an article in *The Nation* and gaining some distance, I realize that the way we should understand the situation in Jordan is uniquely important, and yet we cannot ignore that these issues also manifest in our own local contexts, albeit differently.

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Continued from p.14 God vs. Gay?

going to change the belief system of a deeply religious person whose views are very important to them, explained Dr. Michaelson. Not only is it offensive to ridicule a person's religious views, but also it is ineffective. And a talk about what the scripture "actually" says will lead nowhere as well, because there are too many interpretations and no one will be convinced by a conservative nor a progressive translation. The most successful path toward equality, love, and acceptance—all of which are religious ideals—will be forged by conversing with those people who are willing to hear our stories in a shared language, the language of lived experience.

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continued from p.15 Age of HIV

This devaluation is important because it seems to prevent the kind of trusting relationships that could decelerate the spread of HIV.

Although none of the three men developed effective HIV prevention strategies following break downs in trust, each volunteer exhibited several key ideas: there is a gendered dynamic of activities that lead to trust; trust and emotion play a central role in decision making; it can be difficult to acknowledge that trust has been broken; and it can be difficult to communicate breaks in trust. Each one of these ideas could be tested to make broader claims about HIV risk reduction in the gay male community.



Professor Moeller

During the question and answer period, attendees mostly sought to clarify Moeller's research goals, strategies and findings. Importantly, his talk reminds us that we can find truth in listening carefully to what people say, the contradictions they express and the way they make sense of the world; he encourages researchers to learn about existing HIV strategies before imposing new ones; and he fundamentally acknowledges that marginalized communities, now including black women, are overwhelmingly and disproportionately impacted by HIV, highlighting a past-due need for solutions.

Sister-to-Sister now joined by Brother-to-Brother

The student group Sister-to-Sister celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2013. Originally conceived by former Associate Director of Athletics Gail Smith, former LIS staff member Liane Barreira, and Chellis House director Karin Hanta, the group started out as a winter term class in which several students learned how to mentor middle school girls. The group has become a student organization ever since and has had dozens of dedicated members reach out to 7th and 8th graders in Addison County to help them become self-confident young women. This year's summit at the Mahaney Center for the Arts on November 19, 2013 was a great success and was followed by monthly events with fun activities such as logrolling, tie-dying and international cooking.

Ever since starting Sister-to-Sister, Chellis House director Karin Hanta had envisioned initiating a Brother-to-Brother group that role-modeled healthy masculinity to middle school boys. Her dream became a reality last fall when Middlebury College received a Department of Justice grant to curb sexual violence on campus. The Brother-to-Brother program she proposed in the grant is one element in a scaffolded approach to promote positive masculinity on campus.

On May 3, 2014 the Brother-to-Brother Program had its first kick-off event at McCullough Social Space. Boys from Vergennes and Middlebury gathered with a group of Middlebury College students to do both fun activities, but also engage in some deeper reflection on what it means to be a boy in today's world. "All of the boys who attended were energetic, engaged and open to making new friends," says Jeremy

Stratton-Smith '17. "The group really felt gelled by the end of the afternoon. The event ended with an hour-long reflection/discussion in which we talked about the boys' futures. They offered up that they had not done anything like this in school, which felt good because it is a first step towards having deeper discussions about integrity, respect, confidence, and doing the right thing."



COURSES offered in GSFS!

GSFS/SOAN 0191

Introduction to Sociology of Gender

What is gender and what would a sociology of it look like? When did gender become a category of inquiry and more importantly why? We will look at how the meaning and performance of gender changed over time, from Classical Greece to Victorian England, to the contemporary U.S. We will also look at how gender changes depending on one's position in social space, e.g. one's race, class, sexuality, and nationality. Finally, we will consider how the need to look at gender is the result of a variety of discourses, from psychoanalysis to capitalism to movements of liberation such as feminism. 3 hrs. lect.

CMP, SOC (L. Essig)

GSFS 0200

Foundations in

Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies

This course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of gender, sexuality, and feminist studies. Examining gender and sexuality always in conjunction with the categories of race and class, the course foregrounds how inequalities are perpetuated in different fields of human activity and the creative ways in which groups have resisted these processes. The course is organized in sections to illuminate the effects of particular social institutions and structures on individual lives. Each section will introduce a broad overview of feminist interventions in different fields of inquiry. Cumulatively, the course reveals the importance of gender and sexuality as analytical categories to understand social reality and to comprehend important areas of culture. 3 hrs. lect.

CMP, SOC (A. Koch-Rein)

GSFS/SOAN 0212

The Family in Contemporary Society

This course will investigate the social, economic, and political forces that have brought about changes in family life in the beginning of the 21st century. We will begin by looking at various attempts to define "the family," and we will then explore a range of topics, including the webs of family relationships (e.g., mothering, fathering, kin networks), labor and family intersections (e.g., mediating between work and family; the household division of labor), gay and lesbian family life, and domestic violence. Although the focus will

be on contemporary United States, we will also examine some cross-cultural and historical material. 3 hrs. lect./disc.
CMP, NOR, SOC (M. Nelson)

GSFS/JAPN 0245

Women's Activism in Contemporary Japan

In this course we will critically evaluate Japanese feminism since the late nineteenth century. We will focus on the following themes within Japanese feminism, namely, the structure of work and family life, the relationship between the state, women, and the military, and the politics of reproduction and women's bodies. In addition, we will consider the role of feminism in Japanese society and the connections between global feminisms and Japanese local political struggles. This course will help students develop a deeper understanding of Japanese society and the position of women in society. It will also help students contextualize gender relations and feminist activism cross culturally. 3 hr. lect./disc.

AAL, SOC (L. White)

GSFS/SOAN 0315

Sociology of Freakishness

P.T. Barnum taught us that freaks are always made, not born. A freak is a performance of otherness for fun and profit. In this course we will explore how the freak show gave birth to American culture and how American culture continues to organize itself around the display of freakishness. We will ask what configurations of power are at play in the performance of freaks. How do gender, race, nation, sexuality, and class come into play, and how are those forms of power translated into a performance of otherness that forces us to watch it over and over again?

3 hrs. lect./disc.

(pre. req.: SOAN 0105)

NOR SOC (L. Essig)

GSFS/DANC 0284

Modern Dance History in the United States: Early Influences to Postmodern Transformations

In this seminar we will focus on the emergence and development of 20th century American concert dance--especially modern and postmodern dance forms--from the confluence of European folk and court dance, African and Caribbean

NEW COURSES offered in GSFS!

influences, and other American cultural dynamics. We will look at ways in which dance reflects, responds to, and creates its cultural milieu, with special attention to issues of gender, race/ethnicity, and class. Readings, video, and live performance illuminate the artistic products and processes of choreographers whose works mark particular periods or turning points in this unfolding story. Our study is intended to support informed critical articulations and an understanding of the complexity of dance as art. 3 hrs. lect./2 hrs. screen.

ART NOR (Staff)

GSFS/AMST/HIST 0373

History of American Women: 1869-1999

This course will examine women's social, political, cultural, and economic position in American society from 1869 through the late 20th century. We will explore the shifting ideological basis for gender roles, as well as the effects of race, class, ethnicity, and region on women's lives. Topics covered will include: women's political identity, women's work, sexuality, access to education, the limits of "sisterhood" across racial and economic boundaries, and the opportunities women used to expand their sphere of influence. 3 hrs. lect./disc.

CMP, HIS, NOR (A. Morsman)

GSFS/PHIL 0434

Feminist Epistemologies

In recent years, feminist epistemologies, such as feminist standpoint theories and feminist empiricisms, have been extremely influential in developing social theories of knowledge. They have also served as a crucial intellectual tool for feminist theorists trying to understand the connections between social relations of gender and the production of knowledge. In this course we will investigate some of the major themes and challenges of feminist epistemologies and feminist philosophies of science: How is knowledge socially situated? What does it mean to look at knowledge through a gendered lens? How is objective knowledge possible according to feminist epistemologies? We will work to understand the influence of feminist epistemologies on the fields of philosophy and women's and gender studies. (Approval required; Open to philosophy and women's and gender studies senior and junior majors, this course serves as a senior seminar for both majors. WAGS/GSFS ma-

jors should have previously taken GSFS 0200 and GSFS/SOAN 0191.) 3 hrs. sem.

CMP PHL (H. Grasswick)

GSFS/AMST 0241:

Sexuality in the United States: Histories and Identities

What does sexuality mean? In the United States the meanings of sexuality are highly contested, historically and in the present. Working from an interdisciplinary perspective, we will look at different historical and theoretical approaches to thinking about issues of sexuality and to writing its histories. Drawing from feminist scholarship, queer theory, and lesbian, gay, and transgender studies, we will discuss sexual identities, representations of sexuality, and sexual cultures, and examine how intersecting categories such as race, class, disability, and gender influence how sexuality is understood. 3 hrs. lect.

CMP, HIS, NOR, SOC (A. Koch-Rein)

GSFS/HARC 0338:

Gender and the Making of Space

In this course we will investigate the complex relationship between gender and architecture, examining how the design of the built environment (buildings, urban spaces, etc.) can reinforce or undermine ideas about the respective roles of women and men in society, from the creation of masculine and feminine spaces to the gendered nature of the architectural profession. By looking at both visual evidence and textual sources we will also uncover how the social construction of gender roles and gendered spaces are, and continue to be, inflected by race, class, and sexuality. Not open to students who have taken FYSE 1407. 3 hrs. sem.

ART, HIS, CMP (E. Sassin)

GSFS/RELI 0383:

Storied Women

In this course we will read and analyze stories about women in the Jewish Bible, its Greek translations, and the New Testament, using various historical, literary, and gendered approaches to the study of ancient texts. Though student interests will help determine the final list of the characters we will consider, contenders include Eve, Hagar, Rebekah, Tamar, Deborah, Ruth, Judith, Mary, the women of Paul's letters, and Revelation's great whore of Babylon. In addition to recent academic treatments of the stories, we will also consider some of the ways they have been retold through time and in contemporary literature and film. 3 hrs. sem.

LIT, PHL (L. Yarbrough)